

In the Claims

Please amend the claims, as follows:

Cancel claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 12, and 14.

13. (previously presented) A stringed musical instrument comprising:

- a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole;
- a neck mounted to said hollow body;
- one or more strings stretched over said hollow body and said neck;
- said neck having upper string anchoring means and means for an upper contact point with the string;
- a bridge body secured on the soundboard and having thereon a saddle for providing a lower contact point with the string, said bridge body including
  - a string retainer body with said string retainer body having directing means to guide each string from the lower string anchors past said retainer body to the saddle,
- lower string anchoring means secured to the soundboard wherein one or more of said strings are anchored below the bridge; and,
- wherein said string retainer body
  - consists of a solid material, and,
  - has a recess extending through said retainer body whereby said recess is contoured to allow the strings to pass through said recess in a desired spacing relative to the other strings and along a desired horizontal plane between the saddle body and the lower anchoring means.

15. (previously presented) A stringed musical instrument comprising:

- a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole;
- a neck mounted to said hollow body;
- one or more strings stretched over said hollow body and said neck;
- said neck having upper string anchoring means and means for an upper contact point with the string;
- a bridge body secured on the soundboard and having thereon a saddle for providing a lower contact point with the string; and
- lower string anchoring means secured to the soundboard wherein one or more of said strings are anchored below the bridge; and,
- wherein said lower string anchoring means is comprised of an anchoring module:
  - said anchoring module having a solid module body with a lower edge and with a receiving hole on the lower edge of said module body, each string having a string ball, said receiving hole having a diameter larger than the string diameter but smaller than diameter of the ball of the string; and a recess in said anchoring module body to allow said string to pass through said anchoring module body;
  - an outlet hole in said top side of the anchoring module body, said outlet hole allowing the string to extend past said anchoring module body and towards the bridge body.

Add the following claims.

16. A stringed musical instrument comprising:

- a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole;
- a neck mounted to said hollow body;

one or more strings stretched over said hollow body and said neck;  
said neck having upper string anchoring means and means for an upper contact point with the string;  
a bridge body secured on soundboard and having thereon a saddle for providing a lower contact point with the string;  
lower string anchoring means; and,  
said bridge body including a string retainer body with said string retainer body having directing means to guide each string from the lower string anchoring means past the retainer body to the saddle, and adjustable means for repositioning said bridge body on said soundboard,  
said adjustable means comprising: adjustable fastening means for securing the bridge body to the bridge plate whereby said fastening means can be readily loosened and tightened; and said bridge plate has recessed slots in a direction parallel to the direction of the strings to accommodate said adjustable fastening means, whereby the bridge body can be adjusted along said recessed slots by loosening said fastening means, repositioning said bridge body up or down said recessed slots, and tightening said fastening means.

**17. A stringed musical instrument comprising:**

a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole;  
a neck mounted to said hollow body;  
one or more strings stretched over said hollow body and said neck;

said neck having upper string anchoring means and means for an upper contact point with the string;

a bridge body secured on soundboard and having thereon a saddle for providing a lower contact point with the string;

lower string anchoring means, said lower string anchoring means being comprised of an anchoring module:

said anchoring module having a solid module body with a lower edge and with a receiving hole on the lower edge of said module body, each string having a string ball, said receiving hole having a diameter larger than the string diameter but smaller than diameter of the ball of the string; and a recess in said anchoring module body to allow said string to pass through said anchoring module body, and, said bridge body including a string retainer body with said string retainer body having directing means to guide each string from the lower string anchoring means past the retainer body to the saddle, and adjustable means for repositioning said bridge body on said soundboard.

18. A stringed musical instrument comprising:

a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole;

a neck mounted to said hollow body;

one or more strings stretched over said hollow body and said neck;

first string anchoring mean on said neck

a bridge body secured on the soundboard and having thereon a saddle

second string anchoring means secured to the soundboard; and.

one or more strings stretched over said neck and hollow body, extending from the first anchoring means over and in contact with the saddle of the bridge means to the second string anchoring means, the second string anchoring means so positioned as to reduce the string's tensile forces on the instrument's soundboard.

19. The musical instrument of claim 18 wherein the second string anchoring means are arranged on the soundboard in a radial or fan-like pattern.

20. The musical instrument as set forth in Claim 18 wherein said second string anchoring means is comprised of an anchoring module, said anchoring module having a solid module body with a receiving hole on the lower edge of said module body, said receiving hole having a diameter larger than the string diameter, the string having a ball, the receiving hole diameter being smaller than the diameter of the ball of the string; and a recess in said anchoring module body to allow said string to pass through said anchoring module body

21. A bridge for a stringed musical instrument that includes a hollow body having a soundboard and soundhole, a neck mounted to the body and one or more strings mounted over the body and neck, the bridge comprising:

a bridge body secured on the soundboard and having thereon a saddle for providing a contact point with the strings,

adjustable means for repositioning the bridge body on the soundboard, the adjustable means comprising adjustable fastening means for securing the bridge body against the soundboard whereby the fastening means can be readily loosened and tightened.

22. The bridge of claim 21 including a bridge plate aligned with the bridge body beneath the soundboard, whereby the bridge plate stabilizes the soundboard, the bridge plate having recessed slots in a direction parallel to the direction of the strings to accommodate the adjustable fastening means, whereby the bridge body can be adjusted along the recessed slots by loosening the fastening means, repositioning the bridge in parallel with the recessed slots and tightening the fastening means.

23. The bridge of claim 21 wherein a string retainer body is positioned below the bridge body having directing means to guide each string.

24. The bridge of claim 2 wherein the string retainer body is of solid material and has a recess through the body whereby said recess is contoured to allow the strings to pass through the recess in a desired horizontal plane.